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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 27, 2007

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FORMER UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
EMPLOYEE SENTENCED TO 135-MONTH PRISON TERM
FOR RECEIVING AND POSSESSING CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

FRESNO – United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott announced today LUIS C. RODRIGUEZ, 46, of Sanger, California, was sentenced by United States District Judge Lawrence J. O'Neill in Fresno to a prison term of 135 months for his convictions for one count of receiving depictions of the sexual exploitation of minors and one count of possessing visual depictions of the sexual exploitation of minors. He was convicted after a jury trial on May 30, 2006.

The case was the result of an investigation by the Fresno County Sheriff's Department, Computer Crimes Unit with assistance from the Fresno office of United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

According to Assistant United States Attorney David Gappa, who prosecuted the case, an investigation began when workers at a research laboratory at the University of California Kearney Agricultural Center in Parlier, California complained about pornography that repeatedly appeared on a shared work computer. When an information technology specialist discovered images of naked children on the computer's hard drive, he contacted law enforcement. A Fresno County Sheriff's detective did a forensic examination of the computer and interviewed all of its users. The defendant denied downloading any child pornography, but soon after he was interviewed, he was seen at his home. Smoke was rising from a barrel in his back yard, and when law enforcement arrived they discovered images of child pornography burning in the barrel, broken compact discs and numerous handwritten web site addresses indicating a connection to child pornography secreted in vehicles on the property, and a computer with an internet connection but no hard drive. Fewer than 300 images of child pornography could be recovered. The judge agreed to give the defendant a sentencing enhancement because he had obstructed justice by destroying evidence connected to the investigation.

RODRIGUEZ has been in custody, as a danger to the community and a flight risk, since the conclusion of his trial. He will be required to register as a sex offender and will be on supervised release for 60 months following his release from prison.

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